



State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

*****NEWS RELEASE*****

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Burmaster advocates for changes to NCLB law

MADISON—In her duties as president of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster participated in a press conference Monday in Washington, D.C., to announce the council's plan to update and strengthen No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the nation's laws governing elementary and secondary education, which are up for Congressional reauthorization this year.

"Nothing is more important than ensuring that the reauthorization of NCLB reflects what we have learned over the last five years: what works, what are the challenges, and what must change to truly leave no child behind," Burmaster said. "The CCSSO recommendations are a foundation for bringing meaningful, needed change to our federal education laws. I look forward to continuing to work with our congressional delegation as together we ensure Wisconsin's voice is heard in the reauthorization debate."

Joining Burmaster at the press conference were Valerie Woodruff, CCSSO past-president and Delaware Secretary of Education, and Gene Wilhoit, CCSSO executive director and former commissioner of education in Kentucky. The council's recommendations represent consensus of all 50 states and other jurisdictions. In part, they call for

- improving assessment systems;
- modifying NCLB accountability provisions;
- modifying NCLB identification and sanction provisions; and
- changing provisions of NCLB to better meet the needs of all students.

In addition to her work with CCSSO, Burmaster conducted a series of listening sessions for Wisconsin citizens to gather their thoughts, concerns, and ideas related to the impending reauthorization

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of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as NCLB. “Wisconsin educators identified five major areas of the law—testing, accountability, identification and sanctions, teacher quality, and data collection and reporting—as needing change so NCLB works for all Wisconsin children. We want to ensure that the reauthorized ESEA supports Wisconsin goals: raising student achievement, closing achievement gaps, and ensuring that all students are prepared for postsecondary education, work, and citizenship in the 21st century.”

Burmaster has worked with Wisconsin’s congressional delegation on a range of issues concerning NCLB. She also testified before the Aspen Institute’s Blue Ribbon Commission on No Child Left Behind in Madison last June, providing information on Wisconsin’s efforts to implement requirements related to effective interventions for struggling schools.

“I have listened to Wisconsin educators and shared what they have learned while working with NCLB. I carried ‘Wisconsin’s Voice’ nationally and to my colleagues in the other states,” Burmaster said. “We want to return responsibility for education to the states where we can pursue innovative models for improving student achievement and closing the achievement gap.”

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NOTES: *Wisconsin’s Voice: Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act*, a compilation of information shared during the Wisconsin feedback and input sessions on ESEA, and the state superintendent’s written testimony to the Aspen Institute’s Blue Ribbon Commission on No Child Left Behind are posted on the Department of Public Instruction website at < <http://www.dpi.wisconsin.gov/esea/pdf/wisvoice.pdf> > and < http://www.dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/nclb_testimony_final.pdf >.

This news release is available electronically at < http://www.dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2007_13.pdf >.

The Council of Chief State School Officers news release and “Recommendations to Reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act” are available at < http://www.ccsso.org/Whats_New/Press_Releases/9575.cfm >.